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DENTAL IMPLANT WITH IMPROVED OSSEOINTEGRATION FEATURES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/712,577, filed Aug. 30, 2005, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to dental implants and, in particular, to a dental implant with improved osseointegration features.

2. Description of the Related Art

Dental implants are commonly used as anchoring members for dental restorations to provide prosthetic teeth at one or more edentulous sites in a patient's dentition at which the patient's original teeth have been lost or damaged. Typically, known implant systems include a dental implant made from a suitable biocompatible material, such as titanium. The dental implant is typically threaded into a bore which is drilled into the patient's mandible or maxilla at the edentulous site. The implant provides an anchoring member for a dental abutment, which in turn provides an interface between the implant and a dental restoration. The restoration is typically a porcelain crown fashioned according to known methods.

Many current dental implant surgeries are performed in two stages. In the initial or first stage, an incision is made in the patient's gingiva at an edentulous side, and a bore is drilled into the patient's mandible or maxilla at the edentulous site, followed by threading or impacting a dental implant into the bore using a suitable driver. Thereafter, a cap is fitted onto the implant to close the abutment coupling structure of the implant, and the gingiva is sutured over the implant. Over a period of several months, the patient's jaw bone grows around the implant to securely anchor the implant in the surrounding bone, a process known as osseointegration.

In a second stage of the procedure following osseointegration, the dentist reopens the gingiva at the implant site and secures an abutment and optionally, a temporary prosthesis or temporary healing member, to the implant. Then, a suitable permanent prosthesis or crown is fashioned, such as from one or more impressions taken of the abutment and the surrounding gingival tissue and dentition. In the final stage, the temporary prosthesis or healing member is removed and replaced with the permanent prosthesis, which is attached to the abutment with cement or with a fastener, for example.

Although the osseointegration of existing dental implants into surrounding bone has proven adequate, further improvements in osseointegration of dental implants are desired.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a dental implant which is made at least in part of a highly porous biomaterial such as porous tantalum for enhancing the osseointegration of the dental implant into surrounding bone. In one embodiment, a dental implant is provided which includes a core formed of titanium, for example, the core including a head portion having an abutment interface and a stem portion extending from the head portion. A porous tantalum sleeve is disposed about the stem portion and occupies a substantial portion of the implant/bone interface of the implant. After implantation of the implant, bone tissue may osseointegrate into the porous

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tantalum sleeve to anchor the implant in position within the surrounding bone. Other embodiments of implants are provided, each implant including at least a portion thereof formed of porous tantalum for improved osseointegration.

In one form thereof, the present invention provides a dental implant, including a core, and at least one porous tantalum portion connected to the core. The dental implant may further include a head portion including an abutment interface, and a stem portion projecting from the head portion. The porous tantalum portion may include a sleeve disposed about the stem portion of the core. The core may further include an abutment portion integrally formed with the core.

In another form thereof, the present invention provides a dental implant, including a body formed substantially of porous tantalum, and a bore extending at least partially into the body. The body may further include an outer surface and at least one rib extending from the outer surface.

In other alternative aspects of the embodiments described herein, the core may have a protrusion, such as a helical thread, extending through the porous body. In another alternative, the porous body may have reinforcement, such as reinforcing members, extending within the body, and which may or may not be connected to a head portion of the dental implant. In one form, the head portion is configured to be press-fit onto the porous body.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an exploded sectional view of a dental implant system including a dental implant with a core and a sleeve of porous tantalum, an abutment, and an abutment screw;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged fragmentary view of a portion of the porous tantalum sleeve of the implant of FIG. 1, showing the porous tantalum structure;

FIG. 3 is a partial cross-sectional view of a second embodiment of a dental implant, the dental implant including an implant body and an integral abutment portion;

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view of a third embodiment of a dental implant and an elevational view of an abutment;

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of the dental implant of FIG. 4 and an elevational view of an anchor member;

FIG. 6 is a continuation of FIG. 5, showing deployment of the anchor member, and further showing an abutment;

FIG. 7 is cross-sectional view of a fourth embodiment of a dental implant and an elevational view of an abutment;

FIG. 8 is an elevational view of a fifth embodiment of a dental implant, and showing a thread protruding through a porous portion of the dental implant;

FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional view of a sixth embodiment of a dental implant, and showing a thread protruding through a porous portion of the dental implant;

FIGS. 10A and 10B are cross-sectional alternate forms of a seventh embodiment of a dental implant, further showing a head portion press-fit onto a porous implant body;

FIGS. 11A and 11B are cross-sectional alternate forms of an eighth embodiment of a dental implant, including a porous portion of the dental implant with off-center reinforcements;

FIGS. 12A and 12B are cross-sectional views taken along lines 12A-12A and 12B-12B, respectively, of the dental implant of FIGS. 11A and 11B; and

FIG. 13 is a cross-sectional view of a ninth embodiment of a dental implant, and showing an implant body with a central core and multiple off center cores.

Corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views. The exemplifications set out herein illustrate preferred embodiments of the inven-